

THE MAN-ON-THE-CORNER.

Uses Himself as a Text for Revival of Shakespearian Reflections, Smiles at People Who Take Things to Themselves Gives Assassins of Character a Side-Swipe and "Platts the Hair" of the Amphion Glee Club.

The Man-on-the-Corner remains a mystery, despite the fact that there are many who think they have "gotten onto his curves." From the number of places he appears and the multifarious "observations" he makes, it might reasonably be asserted that the Man-on-the-Corner is a modern Proteus—he must certainly assume—in the time allowed to his peregrinations—numerous forms, characters and colors. Some say Shakespeare's works were written by a cabal of famous scholars at the English court, who wished to paint figures that would live in history, without having their high caste exposed, or being reduced to competition with the "penny-a-liners," who absorbed mixed-ale at the White Horse tavern at the expense of the passing throng, and scribbled off "copy" amid curling fumes from a cob-pipe. The strolling player "Shakespeare," eager to earn his salt, may have served as an excellent "chopping block" for these crude British grandees—who knows? And who can find out, now that all parties to the secret—including Ignatius Donnelly—have gone the way of all the earth? Who knows that the suspected Man-on-the-Corner is only a convenient "storm-center" for a mass of caustic manuscript, written by a coterie of Washington's literary "table-round"—so that the spirit of cohesion may be preserved, while a wide area is being covered? Could Shakespeare, or any other man, have travelled in all the countries described in his productions, or been admitted to the inner circle of the nobility, with whose every heart throb he seemed familiar? In one short week, does anyone think it possible for the Man-on-the-Corner to keep vigil at his putative post, visit the churches, literaries, restaurants, clubs, banquets, balls and schools, and chat with prelates, pugilists, orators, raconteurs, educators, society leaders and politicians, without serious risk of nervous prostration? Well, be all these things as they may, Shakespeare written by any pen or many will never cease to inspire the universal soul, and the Man-on-the-Corner will continue to do business at the old stand, dealing out justice to the meritorious and "roasting" those who will not or cannot "toe the mark" set by "His Imperial Mystery."

Not least among the pleasures derived from furnishing such impersonal matter as this, is the uneasiness produced in certain quarters whenever an article appears scoring somebody for an alleged shortcoming, socially, religiously, or in a business capacity. At once a buzz goes up "Wonder who is he talking about now?"—and there is a sneaking fear on the part of many that it is a "crack" at each of them. A hint of a salacious scandal in "high circles" brings to light a dozen happenings, any one of which may have inspired the "dig." A warning note to an alleged immoral minister; a heart-to-heart slap at a political leader; a criticism of certain school officials; slight mention of a lawyer who has sold out a client or filched an estate; advice to trustees who conduct churches in backwoods style, or a whisper that a notable wedding is on the tapis—and what is the result? Everybody eager to read the meaningless lines, and you would be surprised to hear how many of the editor's good friends will ask him to "take something" and quietly hint to him that the people referred to (in a paragraph, mind you, that may have meant anything or nothing) are very indignant and threaten to stop the paper if any further "attacks" upon them are put into print.

And so runs the world away! Verily, we are a supersensitive race, and imagine that the whole populace "has it in for us," and that the entire planet is worrying about our affairs, when it is doubtful if any considerable percentage is aware of our existence or is concerned over our little comings and goings, which measure an infinitesimal atom in

the economy of civilization. "The wicked flee when no man pursueth!"

There is however, in this connection, a thought that deserves an airing at this time. That is the abominable practice of slyly attempting to cripple the influence of worthy public men by secret aspersion and foul insinuations—without the courage to formulate charges and insist upon an investigation. Innocent as a minister, lawyer, doctor, editor or a woman may be of the faults ascribed to them by the peripatetic gossip and pusillanimous "knocker," it is amazing to one who strives as best he can to do his duty, to feel day by day the increasing sliminess of a rumor that appears

of the composer, and who love the music because they feel in unison with it. This thoroughness is the prevailing characteristic of everything the Amphions do. And no greater compliment can be paid the superb direction of Prof. J. Henry Lewis than this perfection of detail, of which only a master hand is capable, and which calls for wide knowledge, cultivated taste, intelligent selection, unflagging zeal and marvelous patience. For eleven years, Prof. Lewis has clung to this work, and despite many changes in the personnel of his singing forces, he has not only maintained the high standard planned at the outset, but has constantly reached out for and achieved larger results both artistically and financially than the most sanguine believed were possible. The club has appeared before the best people of the country, not only including the President of the United States, the Cabinet and members of Congress, and other distinguished Americans, but before such eminent diplomats as the late Lord Pauncefote, M. Cambon, Baron Von Hollebein, and Mr. Wu-Ting-Fang, being cordially received at every hand. They served thus to indicate to the critics, foreign and domestic, that the Negro interpreters of music is capable of higher lines of musical endeavor



PROF. J. HENRY LEWIS.

to have no head, no tail, or shape. No one knows anything about it—had heard some one mention the matter—but had paid no attention, etc. No one can be induced to file a charge of misconduct, or to draw an affidavit. The victim is just compelled to writhe under the situation, until another newer and more scandalous case attracts these vultures of society to a new scene for rotten revelry. Now and then, a minister by biding his time, succeeds in catching some unusually bold and meddlesome "Mattie," and she gets it "where the chicken got the axe"—to the joy of all lovers of a decent social order, happy homes and appreciators of useful lives. I have in mind a case of this kind now on the docket and if the drivel increases a healthy libel suit may reach the District Attorney's office.

The recent banquet of the famous Amphion Glee Club served a double purpose. Mid the festive song, and sweet converse of friends and public-spirited citizens, a serious vein was disclosed, which is bound to bring many nuggets of value to the club and through it to the community. First, there was the music of the Amphions themselves—high-grade classics, lightened by a strain of the popular and humorous—rendered by a round dozen male voices, rich, resonant and harmonious. They sing, not by rote, as so many graphophone machines, but as enthusiastic exponents of melody, whose souls have caught the inspiration

than the "coon song"—with its nauseating suggestiveness—and even the "jubilee" song—which, however, pathetic, is but a reminiscence of the slaves' cry for freedom, and belongs not to this age of expansion. The Amphions, as individuals, by their unswerving loyalty to Director Lewis, are doing a noble service in opening the eyes of the world to the Negro's vast possibilities in music and the community owes them hearty, substantial and continuous support. While S. Coleridge Taylor is holding aloft the banner in the old world, supplemented by such artists and composers as Harvey T. Burleigh, Alphonso Johnston, Augustus Haston, Sidney Woodward, Rachel Walker, Mme E. Azalia Hackley, besides the host of professionals of the regular stage, the Amphions are mastering the situation in this vicinity, and adding fresh laurels to their already luxuriant store. The second notable feature of the banquet was the testimony of the popularity of the Amphions with the people, given in the earnest, philosophical and commendatory speeches delivered by representative citizens. The club and the community were brought together under the very happiest of auspices.

The Washington Post, a few mornings ago, published in its hotel lobby column, some references to the late Henry Demas, who was McKinley's unconfirmed nominee for naval officer at New Orleans. Demas' defeat it is said

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